

THE

LETTER

SHEKEL

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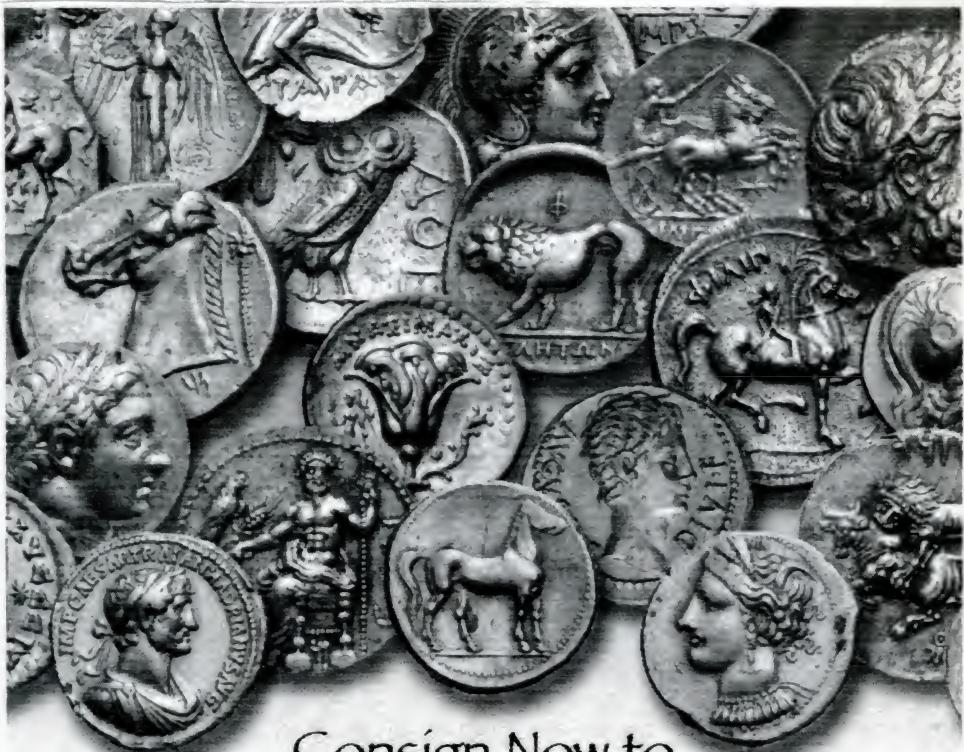
VOLUME XXXX

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NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2007

The Altalena on Fire off Tel-Aviv Beach





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EDWARD SCHUMAN, Editor

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President's Message

By Mel Wacks

It has been 40 years since AINA was formed. Time flies when you are having fun – and nothing can give you more fun and satisfaction than a hobby like coin collecting.

Speaking of fun, anyone who was on one of the AINA tours to Israel can tell you what a great time they had – especially the new life-long friends they made. We are planning what we promise will be an equally memorable Israel tour for next October, celebrating Israel's 60th birthday. We have reserved 25 rooms and we invite you to tell us now if you think you will join the board of directors on this once-in-a-lifetime trip.

Things aren't finalized yet, but here's a good idea of our itinerary:

- * 12 nights in 4 and 5 star hotels plus a kibbutz guesthouse.
- * Visit the Kadman Numismatic Museum, the Israel Government Mint, meet the numismatic curator of the Israel Museum, and visit a leading medalist's studio; also a special banquet with the Israel Government Coins & Medals Corp.
- * Visit the Tel Dan and Chai Bar Nature Reserves, historic synagogues in Safed, important archaeological sites such as Beit Alpha Synagogue and the Beit Guvrin Caves (where you might be able to dig for 2,300 year old pottery, and float in the Dead Sea.
- * Visit religious and historical sites such as the Western Wall, Masada, new excavations in Caesarea.
- * Visit a Druse village, have discussions with kibbutz members, and take an optional guided tour of the 1,800 year old Nabatean city of Petra.
- * Plus much more –museums, breakfast daily and 5 dinners, important Christian sites, walking tours in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv -- and lots of fun!

We will prepare a complete itinerary as soon as possible. The cost will be about \$3,350 plus taxes including airfare from New York. But don't wait – let us know as soon as possible if you would like to join us by calling me at (818) 225-1348, emailing me at ainapresident@lycos.com or writing to Mel Wacks, President of AINA, PO Box 20255, Fountain Hills, AZ 85269.

Happy collecting,



The Editors Page

By Edward Schuman

It is not often that errors appear in Shekel articles as your editor makes every effort to insure that the information printed is correct. But mistakes do happen. In the September-October issue, in the article on Casimir III and the Polish Jews, by Marvin Tameanko it has been brought to our attention that the moneyer whose coin is shown on page 25, was Rabbi Abraham Bar Joseph Nagid, but the inscription reads as Rabbi Abraham Bar Yitzchak Nagid. In checking his sources, the author realized that his eyes had dropped one name down the table list of these coins and wrote Bar Yoseph, another Polish moneyer, instead of Bar Yitzchak. I have been asked to print a correction in the next issue of the Shekel saying the coin was struck by Rabbi Abraham Bar Yitzchak and not Bar Yoseph. Unfortunately your editor is not able to translate Hebrew with any accuracy. Four A.I.N.A members have contacted us in regards to the error. It is comforting to know that some members do scrutinize the Shekel.

Our secretary-treasurer Donna Sims is busy preparing the annual dues notices which will be sent to all regular members. If you would mail back your dues promptly this would make her task that much easier. We know from experience that it is a lot of work and expense to mail out reminders letters. Your cooperation would be greatly appreciated.

On membership news, The Israel Government Coins and Medals Corp. included a flyer for new AINA members with their last mailing. Thus far AINA has gained more than a dozen new members including ones in Germany and England. And the mail is still coming in.

If my health permits, Florence and I will be in attendance at the AINA table at the F.U.N. show in Orlando January 10 - 13, 2008. The Florida United Numismatists is host of the nation's largest coin show, held annually at the beginning of January. Over 15,000 collectors and dealers from around the U.S. and the world converge in the sunny climate for the first bellwether gathering of the year. Please stop by and say hello if you are in the vicinity.

Please note our new email address
Schuf feather@atlanticbb.net



The Altalena Tragedy

The Altalena Affair was a violent confrontation that took place in June of 1948 between the newly-formed Israel Defense Forces and the Irgun (*Etzel*), a paramilitary Jewish group. The confrontation involved a cargo ship, *Altalena*, captained by Monroe Fein, which carried weapons and fighters for the Irgun.

As the British Mandate of Palestine was coming to an end, Jewish leaders proclaimed the establishment of the State of Israel (May 14, 1948). The declaration of independence was followed by the establishment of a provisional government and the Israel Defense Forces (IDF). The process of absorbing all military organizations into the IDF proved complicated, and several paramilitary groups continued to be active outside the IDF. One of the largest groups, Irgun (known in Hebrew as *Etzel*, an acronym for *Irgun Tzvai Leumi*, lit. *National Military Organization*), planned to ship weapons and fighters to the newly formed state. The plans included a ship renamed and a target date for the ship's arrival from Europe was set to mid May 1948. The *Altalena*, purchased by Irgun members abroad, was originally intended to reach Israel on May 15, 1948, loaded with fighters and military equipment.

Weapons purchase and organizational matters took longer than expected, however, and the sailing was postponed for several weeks. Meanwhile, on June 1st, an agreement had been signed for the absorption of the Irgun into the IDF and one of the clauses stated that the Irgun had to cease all independent arms acquisition activities. Consequently, representatives of the Israel Government were informed about the ship and its sailing schedule.

The Irgun headquarters in Paris did their best to keep the *Altalena's* preparations for departure a secret, but it was difficult to conceal the movement of 940 fighters and the loading of a large quantity of arms and ammunition. It was feared that if the plans were discovered, attempts might be made to sabotage the *Altalena* at sea. For this reason, when it raised anchor on June 11th, no cable was sent to the Irgun command in Israel, for fear that it would fall into the wrong hands. These precautionary measures proved fruitless, however, and the following day Radio London reported that the *Altalena* had sailed from Port-de-Bouc, France in the direction of Israel with 1,000 Jewish volunteers and a large quantity of weapons on board.

It should be recalled that the first truce had begun on June 11th. When the Irgun leaders in Israel learned through the broadcast of the

embarkation of the vessel, they feared that this breach of the truce conditions (i.e., the ban on bringing military equipment and fighters into the country) would be revealed. Menachem Begin decided therefore to postpone the arrival of the ship, and the Irgun staff secretary, Zippora Levi-Kessel, sent a wireless message to the *Altalena* to stay put and await orders. A similar cable was sent to Shmuel Katz (member of the General Headquarters), who was then in Paris, but the ship had already left the day before the message arrived.

On June 15th, Begin and his comrades held a meeting with government representatives, at which Begin announced that the ship had sailed without his knowledge and that he wanted to hold consultations on how to proceed. In his diary for June 16th, David Ben-Gurion, the head of the provisional government, wrote the following about the meeting:

Yisrael [Galili] and Skolnik [Levi Eshkol] met yesterday with Begin. Tomorrow or the next day their ship is due to arrive: 4,500 tons, bringing 800-900 men, 5,000 rifles, 250 Bren guns, 5 million bullets, 50 bazookas, 10 Bren carriers. Zipstein (director of Tel Aviv port) assumes that at night it will be possible to unload it all. I believe we should not endanger Tel Aviv port. They should not be sent back. They should be disembarked at an unknown shore.

Galili informed Begin of Ben-Gurion's consent to the landing of the ship, adding a request that it be done as fast as possible. Zippora Levi-Kessel then radioed the vessel to come in at full speed. The following day, a working meeting was held between Irgun representatives and Ministry of Defense personnel. While the Irgun proposed directing the *Altalena* to Tel Aviv beach, Ministry of Defence representatives claimed that the Kfar Vitkin beach was preferable, since it would be easier to evade UN observers there. The ship was therefore instructed to make for Kfar Vitkin.

Intense negotiations between representatives of the provisional government (headed by David Ben Gurion) and the Irgun (headed by Menachem Begin) followed the departure of *Altalena* from France. Among the issues discussed were logistics of the ship's landing and distribution of the cargo between the military organizations. While there was agreement on the anchoring place of the *Altalena*, there were differences of opinion about the allocation of the cargo. Ben-Gurion agreed to Begin's initial request that 20% of the weapons be dispatched to the Irgun's Jerusalem Battalion, which was still fighting independently. His second request, however, that the remainder be transferred to the IDF to equip the newly-incorporated Irgun battalions, was rejected by the Government

representatives, who interpreted the request as a demand to reinforce an "army within an army."

The *Altalena* reached Kfar Vitkin in the late afternoon of Sunday, June 20th. Among the Irgun members waiting on the shore was Menachem Begin, who greeted the arrivals with great emotion. After the passengers had disembarked, members of the fishing village of Michmoret helped unload the cargo of military equipment. Concomitantly with the events at Kfar Vitkin, the government had convened in Tel Aviv for its weekly meeting. Ben-Gurion reported on the meetings which had preceded the arrival of the *Altalena*, and was adamant in his demand that Begin surrender and hand over of all the weapons:

We must decide whether to hand over power to Begin or to order him to cease his separate activities. If he does not do so, we will open fire! Otherwise, we must decide to disperse our own army.

The debate ended in a resolution to empower the army to use force if necessary to overcome the Irgun and to confiscate the ship and its cargo. Implementation of this decision was assigned to the Alexandroni Brigade, commanded by Dan Even (Epstein), which the following day surrounded the Kfar Vitkin area. Dan Even issued the following ultimatum:

To: M. Begin By special order from the Chief of the General Staff of the Israel Defense Forces, I am empowered to confiscate the weapons and military materials which have arrived on the Israeli coast in the area of my jurisdiction in the name of the Israel Government. I have been authorized to demand that you hand over the weapons to me for safekeeping and to inform you that you should establish contact with the supreme command. You are required to carry out this order immediately. If you do not agree to carry out this order, I shall use all the means at my disposal in order to implement the order and to requisition the weapons which have reached shore and transfer them from private possession into the possession of the Israel government. I wish to inform you that the entire area is surrounded by fully armed military units and armored cars, and all roads are blocked. I hold you fully responsible for any consequences in the event of your refusal to carry out this order. The immigrants - unarmed - will be permitted to travel to the camps in accordance with your arrangements. You have ten minutes to give me your answer. D.E.. Brigade Commander"

The ultimatum, and in particular the demand for an answer within ten minutes, was insulting and unrealistic. It was made, according to Even "in

order not to give the Irgun commander time for lengthy considerations and to gain the advantage of surprise." Begin refused to respond to the ultimatum, and all attempts at mediation failed. Begin's failure to respond was a blow to Even's prestige, and a clash was now inevitable. Fighting ensued and there were a number of casualties. In order to prevent further bloodshed, the Kfar Vitkin settlers initiated negotiations between Yaakov Meridor (Begin's deputy) and Dan Even, which ended in a general ceasefire and the transfer of the weapons on shore to the local IDF commander.

Begin had meanwhile boarded the *Altalena*, which was now heading for Tel Aviv. He hoped that it would be possible to enter into a dialogue with the Provisional Government and to unload the remaining weapons peacefully. But this was not the case. Ben-Gurion ordered Yigael Yadin (acting Chief of Staff) to concentrate large forces on the Tel Aviv beach and to take the ship by force. Heavy guns were transferred to the area and at four in the afternoon, Ben-Gurion ordered the shelling of the *Altalena*. One of the shells hit the ship, which began to burn. There was danger that the fire would spread to the holds which contained explosives, and Captain Monroe Fein ordered all aboard to abandon ship. People jumped into the water, whilst their comrades on shore set out to meet them on rafts. Although Captain Fein flew the white flag of surrender, automatic fire continued to be directed at the unarmed survivors swimming in the water. Begin, who was on deck, agreed to leave the ship only after the last of the wounded had been evacuated. Sixteen Irgun fighters were killed in the confrontation with the army; six were killed in the Kfar Vitkin area and ten on Tel Aviv beach. Three IDF soldiers were killed: two at Kfar Vitkin and one in Tel Aviv.

After the shelling of the *Altalena*, more than 200 Irgun fighters were arrested on Ben-Gurion's orders. Most of them were released several weeks later, with the exception of five senior commanders (Moshe Hason, Eliyahu Lankin, Yaakov Meridor, Bezalel Amitzur, and Hillel Kook), who were detained for more than two months. (They were released, due to public pressure, on August 27, 1948).

The *Altalena* Affair exposed deep rifts between the main political factions in Israel, and continued to be a major source of bitter controversy in the Israeli political discourse for decades. Proponents of Ben Gurion's actions praised them as essential to establishing the Government's authority and discouraging factionalism and formation of rival armies. Furthermore, Ben Gurion's supporters have argued, in parallel to the policies implemented during the takeover of the Russian Revolution by socialist militants 30 years earlier, that a state must have a monopoly over the use of

force. The Irgun, by attempting to import weapons to use as a private militia, was undermining the legitimacy of the fledgling State of Israel.

Opponents condemned the unnecessary violence and claimed that opportunities for a peaceful resolution were intentionally frustrated by Ben-Gurion and top IDF officers. As events have faded into history, the debate on Altalena in Israel has become less intense, though it was reignited for a short time when a political party headed by Menachem Begin won the Israeli general elections in 1977. Opponents still hold a grudge against Labor for discriminating against them before and after the creation of the state and hold his leadership responsible for not doing enough to defend Jerusalem during the Israeli War of Independence. They believe that had Ben Gurion allowed the *Altalena* to resupply fighters in Jerusalem, the war would have ended more successfully for Israel.

Begin later said, "My greatest accomplishment was not retaliating and causing civil war". Years later, on the eve of the Six-Day War, in June 1967 (when Levi Eshkol was Prime Minister), Menachem Begin joined a delegation which visited Sde Boker to ask David Ben-Gurion to return and accept the premiership again. After that meeting, Ben-Gurion said that if he had then known Begin as he did now, the face of history would have been different.

Menachem Begin never publicly revealed the name of the commander that ruthlessly killed innocent Jewish soldiers and sunk the *Altalena*. However, unsubstantiated rumor has always named Yitzhak Rabin, the former Prime Minister of Israel, who himself was assassinated by another Jew as being the commander.

The *Altalena* medal commemorates the infamous *Altalena* incident. The obverse shows the *Altalena* by the Tel-Aviv seashore billows of smoke rising from it. The reverse a descriptive rescue of the boat flag by Yiphtach Stewin below the flag emblem, a Magen David.



Letter to the Editor - A Message of Thanks

Dear Ed,

I wholeheartedly wish you keep healthy and well, for yourself and, not least, for your being the indispensable man at the helm of "The Shekel", which under your editorship has become a magnificent mouthpiece of numismatic topics in addition to exhibiting a very enlightening picture of Jewish affairs from the different corners of the world.

In publishing my articles in "The Shekel" the last 18 years (since 1989) you have broached before me the appropriate opportunity to portray a vivid picture of the realm of Israeli Banknotes and Coins. Of my 37 years tenure in the Bank of Israel, more than 20 years were dedicated to the issue of Israeli banknotes and coins. This fact has lodged me in a position that has facilitated the way to explore many of which are scantily known or lacking deeper classifications, and thereby made it easier for me to expose them for wider public perception.

The most vigorous task I was assigned to was to solely handle the complicated program of exchanging the pound into the sheqel in the period from October 1978 to February 1980. Known as "Operation Menorah", it was conducted in tight secrecy, unknown even to my immediate assistants. Those in the knowledge were only the Governor, the two Deputy Governors and the Secretary General, under whose capacity was the currency supply unit.

That was for me a period of great stress and heavy responsibility, sharing it with no-one else. The day-to-day relations with the printers and the mints, which were preparing the new banknotes and coins, were conducted in total hush-hush; letters being written by hand and received only by diplomatic mail; telephone communications managed from my home late at night or in general language so that even my wife will not be able to decipher my talks! Above all I had to put up with an unabated and nagging anxiety that some information, or a shot in the dark, might be leaked to the public knowledge, even with a possible effect on the economy of Israel.

Imagine what sort of immense relief glided in my veins when the veil of secrecy was finally lifted on Friday afternoon, February 22nd 1980, through a dramatic TV announcement by the Minister of Finance

and the Governor of the Bank of Israel about the changeover, with me sitting in the background. In the same evening I was interviewed in TV about the long preparation for the changeover and became a celebrity for a day. I must say I have been very lucky to have accomplished this task successfully without a hitch.

A few years later, in 1985, I was again responsible to prepare the banknotes and coins for the introduction of the new sheqel to replace the sheqel, due to the soaring inflation then prevailing. This time I was assisted by a small unit, though the whole operation was again carried out in total secrecy.

I joined the Currency Supply unit in 1979 as Assistant Head, then held the position of Head of the unit in 1981. I was promoted to the title of Assistant Director, Currency Department in September of that year, and kept this capacity until my retirement in April 1992.

In ascending this ladder of advancement I have served throughout as a central figure in implementing the decisions taken by the Governor and the Advisory Committee of the Bank, involving the whole process of producing banknotes and coins in Israel.

I am proud to have been bestowed with this inimitable opportunity. I am also pleased that my actions have been received with praise by all those concerned, the Governor, the Directors, the co-workers; the parallel officers in all the foreign establishments with whom our contacts were administered.

After the publication of more than 75 articles in "The Shekel", I feel I have enriched the knowledge of many on the intertwined issue of banknotes and coins. This is a profession that remains the specialty of the few in the world, notwithstanding the more openness manifested in the last few decades.

I am very happy that "The Shekel" has offered me this creditable opportunity, hoping that the readers have enjoyed reading them as much as I have enjoyed writing them. Every time an article of mine saw light in "The Shekel" a stir of pleasure and satisfaction engulfed me.

I deeply thank you, and ANNA, for the warm reception I was met with. I devotedly cherish the personal relationship that we have developed along the years.

Best wishes for Florence and you.

Amicably,

Siege Coins of Ancient Judaea

By David Hendin

Since it was invented in the seventh century BC, coinage has served both primary and secondary functions. While the primary function has been economic, there have been a number of secondary functions in different times and places. One interesting secondary function is the minting of coins in cities under siege as propaganda tactics of wartime. This phenomenon results in issues known as "siege coins," and spans the millennia since coins were invented.

The siege coins of ancient Judaea are of special interest for collectors who focus on both Christian and Jewish aspects of Biblical numismatics. Ya'akov Meshorer, the late chief curator of archaeology at The Israel Museum, Jerusalem, presented a paper on this subject in 1986 at the Tenth International Congress of Numismatics in London.

According to Meshorer, there are five specific areas of siege coins of ancient Judaea. Four emanate from Jerusalem, and one from Gamla, the famous siege town in the Golan Heights.

Herod's Siege of Jerusalem

In 40 BC, Mattathias Antigonus, the last Hasmonean king, began his rule over Judaea as High Priest and self anointed "King." He minted coins with the same designs as his ancestors. However, he added larger denominations for the first time. He probably added the larger coins to compete with his rival King Herod I (the Great), who also struck both 4 and 8 prutah denominations. In 37 BC Herod and his Roman allies besieged Jerusalem and threatened to end five generations of rule by the Hasmoneans.

The Jewish population was desperately afraid of such a turn of events, and Antigonus issued a unique coin type during the siege. This coin depicted "the two most prestigious cult vessels of the Temple: the candelabrum (menorah) on one side and the showbread table on the other, Meshorer explained. "The depiction of the Temple



H-555
at 1.5X

Figure 1—Coin of Mattathias Antigonus depicting the menorah and the showbread table (Hendin-485).

house after the design of the Temple, a courtyard after the design of the Temple court a table after the design of the table (in the Temple), or a candelabrum after the design of the candelabrum. Interestingly, this paragraph focuses -quite specifically on the menorah and the showbread table, selecting them from all of the objects in the Temple; and brings them together in a single category,

Meshorer pointed out that it was not until the third century AD that the menorah became the most important Jewish symbol 'Thus the depiction of the irnage on a coin minted as early as the reign of Antigonus is a remarkable and daring phenomenon, which must be seen in the context of the contemporary historical circumstances. Antigonus may have depicted the candelabrum and the table on his coins both to encourage his supporters and to remind the people of their duty to preserve the sanctity of the Temple (and its High Priest) from the 'foreigners.

Siege of Gamla

We know about the siege of Gamla in 67 AD from the writings of Josephus. The site itself was either lost or completely overlooked for generations and only excavated starting in the mid-1970s. Gamla is often referred to as "the Masada of the north." It was a Jewish zealot stronghold during the Jewish War against Rome. Vespasian himself, before he became king, led the Roman troops in a fierce battle against the Jews of Gamla.

Gamla issued a siege coin that is extremely rare, and is a very crude imitation of the Jewish shekel of the time. ..These coins are so unusual, in fact, that Meshorer notes that "if they had not been discovered during an archaeological dig, their authenticity would certainly be doubted." Many of the standard Jewish war issues have been found in various sites in the areas around Gamla, so there are no doubt that the people of Gamla saw and used those coins.

They were impressed by the nationalistic inscriptions and designs depicted on the coins, and they appreciated the political impact made by the issues," Meshorer explained. At Gamla, he added, "the meanin of these coins was a token of national pride to encourage the warriors on the walls."



H-673

Figure 2-Crude Gamla shekel patterned after the silver shekels of the Jewish War (Hendin-673).

Titus' Siege of Jerusalem

The Jewish War, also referred to as the First Revolt, culminated with a siege of Jerusalem by Titus in 70 AD. In the fourth year of this war, some of the Jewish bronze coins began to carry written denominations for the first time. "Denominational names are rarely depicted on ancient coinage. They appear only if demanded by circumstances to indicate a change in value or to prevent a potential misunderstanding," Meshorer noted: Rampant inflation in the besieged Jerusalem, along with a shortage of silver, led to this "emergency issue" in the fourth year of the war. Bronze coins marked "half" and "quarter" in Hebrew, no doubt represented "half-a-shekel" and "quarter-of-a-shekel." Another smaller denomination is no doubt worth one-eighth of a shekel.

In the first three years of this brutal war, the Jewish coins were inscribed "[For the] Freedom of Zion." But in the fourth year the legend was changed to "[For the] Redemption of Zion." Meshorer explained that "The switch from 'freedom' to 'redemption' reflects the political conditions of Jerusalem in AD 69. 'Freedom' suggests that the Jews expected to end Roman domination of Judaea by their own hands. But in the fourth year of the war, they had lost all but Jerusalem and Masada...Hope no longer focused on the power of the people, but rather a heavenly redemption was required... The coins indicate that the minting authorities hoped that the new designs and legend would encourage the Jews to persevere."



H-668

Figure 3—Bronze half shekel of the Jewish War (Hendin-668).

Persian Siege of Jerusalem

The Romans issued numerous "city coins" from their mints in Jerusalem throughout the Roman period. But Byzantine coins of Jerusalem were unknown until two were published in 1981.

Two different types of follis coins were issued in Jerusalem under Heraclius. These carry the mint name in Greek- IEPOCO. Jerusalem was especially important to the Christian Byzantine Empire because of all its religious sites. When the Persians entered Palestine in 613 AD after conquering Syria, the local inhabitants "deplored the idea that the holiest of all Christian places would fall into the hands of heathens."

Thus, Meshorer explained that "In order to rally support for

repulsion of the Persians during those dramatic days, the authorities of Jerusalem struck coins for propaganda purposes. They hoped to highlight the importance of their efforts and, at the same time, raise the morale of the defenders. ..The fact that these inscriptions are in Greek while all the rest of the inscriptions on the coins are in Latin emphasizes that the minting authorities wanted to insure that the city's populace would understand the message.

Saladin's Siege of Jerusalem

The Crusader Balien ruled over Jerusalem in 1187, when the Arab Saladin besieged and broke into the city. Meshorer quotes the Chronicle of Emoul: "Then Balien and the Patriarch went and had the tomb edicule of the Sepulchre, which was all covered in silver, uncovered; and then they had it taken away to be struck into moncy tq give the knights and sergeants." Indeed, there is a very rare crusader denier depicting the tower of David on one side and the sarcophagus and edicule of the tomb of the Holy Sepulchre church on the other. Meshorer explains: "This issue has all the characteristics of emergency coins. Even the use of this kind of source of metal - the tomb edicule silver cover, is of a crisis nature done under siege conditions. The small quantity of coins found indicates a limited issue that was struck during a short period of time."

All these examples of "siege money" give us a little additional insight into the way a world worked when there were no mass media to use to communicate and propagandize the population.

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Meah Shearim

Meah Shearim is one of the oldest neighborhoods of Jerusalem bounded on the north by Meah Shearim Street, it was established in 1874 as the second settlement outside the walls of the Old City by a building society of 100 shareholders. Pooling their resources, the society members purchased a tract of land outside the Old City, which was severely overcrowded and plagued by poor sanitation, and built a new neighborhood with the goal of improving their standards of living. Very few dared to leave the protection of the walls in those days. The terrain was rocky and uncultivated, and Arab marauders roamed freely. Hence the early inhabitants of Meah Shearim, whose families were descended from the Perushim, followers of the Gaon of Vilna, who settled in Palestine in the early 19th century, were pioneers in the true sense of the word.

The name Meah Shearim is derived from a verse in the Bible - Genesis 26:12. Isaac sowed in that land, and in that year he reaped a hundredfold; God had blessed him. The residents hoped that like Isaac, they, too would prosper and enjoy God's blessings. Some interpret the name literally, as "100 Gates," but there seems to be no basis for that claim.

Today, Meah Shearim remains an Old World enclave in the midst of a city that aspires to modernity. With its overwhelmingly *Haredi* population, the streets retain the flavor of an East European shtetl. Life revolves around strict adherence to Jewish law, prayer and the study of Jewish texts. Traditions in dress may include black frock coats and black or fur-trimmed hats for men, although there are many other clothing styles, depending on the religious sub-group to which they belong, and long-sleeved, modest clothing for women. In some groups, the women wear thick black stockings all year long, even in summer. Married women wear a variety of head coverings, from wigs to headscarves. The men have beards and some grow long sidecurls, called *peyos*. On the Sabbath, some wear light-color or striped robes.

The neighborhood is populated almost exclusively by Orthodox Jews. Chasidic groups with a large number of followers in Meah Shearim include Breslov, Slonim and Toldos Aharon. Meah Shearim is also the stronghold of the anti-Zionist Neturei Karta movement. The "Edah HaChareidis", which supervises kashrut certification, and operates a Jewish legal court, has its offices in Zhupnik Court, near Meah Shearim.

To keep out scantily-clad women and prevent the neighborhood from being overrun by large groups of tourists, which they find offensive, "modesty" posters in Hebrew and English are hung at every entrance. The picture on the front page of this issue shows the main entrance to Meah Shearim

To show respect, visitors to Meah Shearim should adhere to the following rules: Modest dress for women and girls (knee-length skirts or longer, no plunging necklines or midriff tops, no sleeveless blouses or bare shoulders) Tourists should avoid visiting the neighborhood in large, conspicuous groups. Residents should not be photographed or filmed without permission.

During the Jewish Sabbath, from sunset Friday until it is completely dark on Saturday night, refrain from violating the Sabbath in any way. That means no mobile phones, no cigarettes, no photo or video cameras. Avoid wearing blatant Christian symbols or T-shirts with Christian slogans

The daily language for many ultra ultra-Orthodox Jews is Yiddish, a German-Jewish dialect. They refuse to speak Hebrew, Israel's official language. They view it as a sacred tongue, to be used in prayer and learning, not debased in daily, irreverent use. The more moderate, however, will speak Hebrew.

One of Meah Shearim's prominent features are the posters affixed to walls, fences and doors. Posters are the neighborhood's common form of social communication. And some say the quarter's decrepit walls would have collapsed long ago were it not for the posters holding them together. The posters convey a variety of messages. Some warn of proper dress for women: "Jewish daughters, the holy Torah obligates you to dress modestly at all times, with long sleeves and closed necklines." Others decry watching television or a Jerusalem pool that allows mixed-sex swimming. Still others denounce another ultra-Orthodox sect for its treason, wickedness or godlessness.

Most Meah Shearim inhabitants see Jewish sovereignty in the Holy Land as an outrageous sin since the Messiah and the End of Days have not yet arrived. They see the State of Israel as premature and in violation of holy scripture. They consider the state to be in the hands of sinners and impostors. They shun Israel's Orthodox establishment, headed by the chief rabbinate. They view the Orthodox ritual baths as unclean, its slaughterhouses as not kosher enough, its chief rabbis as flawed and their rulings deviant.

The more radical sects do not even recognize the State of Israel. They refuse to pay taxes, serve in the armed forces or accept aid from the government. Although it's common to pray for one's country and its people, the ultra ultras do not include Israel and its citizens in their prayers. Some go so far as to believe the Holocaust was God's retribution for Zionist efforts to create a Jewish state.

One ultra ultra sect in Meah Shearim, Neturei Karta (Guardians of the City), raises black flags on Israeli national holidays. During the 1948 Arab siege of Jerusalem, Meah Shearim was only about 100 yards from the Jordanian-Israeli front line. And Neturei Karta leaders were preparing to go over to the Arab side, feeling that life under Moslem rule would be preferable to life under a godless Jewish government. Only the threat of summary execution prevented them from hoisting a white flag.

The more moderate ultra-Orthodox, however, take a pragmatic view of Israel. They will vote, form political parties and run for office. Their deputies in the Knesset will support any government in return for exempting their youth from military service and for state subsidies for their yeshivas — an academy where men and boys pursue religious studies. Yeshivas are Meah Shearim's dominant institution.

A Meah Shearim Yeshiva token illustrates this article.



A ROYAL MINT TRIAL DIE 1927

Usually before a new issue of coinage is put into the planning stage, a series of pattern coins are prepared using different themes. This was not the case of the Palestine Mandate coinage which featured the three languages used in Palestine namely English, Hebrew and Arabic. The British used the tri-lingual motif so as not to offend any sector of the population and to insure that the coinage would be accepted by all.

Contrary to the above reasoning, this Royal Mint die trial die features a Star of David with the date 1927 on the obverse. The reverse shows a depiction of an ancient Greek moneyer with the legend "Britannia Moneta".

It is not certain if this issue was intended as a die trial for the Palestine Mandate Coinage but coincidentally 1927 was the initial year of the Palestine Mandate series which was also struck at the Royal Mint.

The item was previously unknown to numismatists who study the Palestine Mandate series.



The Warsaw Ghetto

The Warsaw Ghetto was the largest of the Jewish ghettos established by Nazi Germany in the General Government during the Holocaust in World War II. Between 1940 and 1943, starvation, disease and deportations to concentration camps and extermination camps dropped the population of the ghetto from an estimated 450,000 to approximately 70,000. In 1943 the Warsaw Ghetto was the scene of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, one of the first mass uprisings against Nazi occupation in Europe.

The Warsaw Ghetto was established by the German Governor-General Hans Frank on October 16, 1940. At this time, the population of the Ghetto was estimated to be 440,000 people, about 37% of the population of Warsaw. However, the size of the Ghetto was only about 4.5% of the size of Warsaw. Nazis then closed off the Warsaw Ghetto from the outside world on November 16th that year, building a wall.

On October 2, 1940 walls of houses in Warsaw were posted over with bills announcing the establishment of a Jewish district. The action of the displacement lasted more than one month. During this time, according to the official German documents, 113,000 Poles and 138,000 Jews had to leave their homes. The Jews were allowed to take along only a package of food, clothing and bedding. Isolating people in the ghettos - the districts cut off from the rest of the city - was the next act of the discrimination of the Jews.

As early as November, 1939 Germans forced the Jews from the Polish General Government to wear white arm bands with a blue Star of David. Jews were dismissed from their jobs and dispossessed of their bank savings. Their shops and businesses were confiscated. They were not allowed to leave the marked areas of the city.

In the beginning the Jewish district was surrounded by barbed wire entanglements, at a later date by a five foot high brick wall topped with a barbed wire. All streets exits, windows and doors bordering upon the Aryan side were blocked up. The Jewish community had to bear all the expenses of building the wall.

On November 16, 1940 the Warsaw ghetto became a closed area. Jews were allowed to leave only with permits. There were 15 exits from the ghetto through gates guarded by German Schutzpolizei, Polish police and Jewish militia organized in the ghetto (Ordungsdienst). On October 15, 1941 Hans Frank, the Governor, declared that leaving the ghetto

without a permit was punishable by death. The same penalty is applied for assistance to Jews who have left Jewish residential areas.

The Warsaw ghetto, where about 450 000 people were imprisoned, was the largest ghetto in Europe. Besides the Warsaw Jews, there lived Jewish refugees from others Polish towns, people moved to Warsaw from neighboring towns; deported from Germany and from the Bohemian and Moravia Protectorate.

The small area of the ghetto, about 5 km, was extremely crowded. Six to seven people on average lived in one room. The sanitary and hygienic conditions were very bad, especially in those places, where refugees and homeless persons inhabited.

The ghetto was administered by the Judenrat convened by Germans, with Adam Czerniakow as a chairman. The Judenrat was strictly subordinated to Germans and its autonomy was limited.

Most of the ghetto' inhabitants lost their pre-war employments and savings, the refugees very often lost their all their possession. People became impoverished very quickly as it was difficult to get a job in the ghetto. They suffered from hunger. The nutritional value of daily rations did not exceed 230 calories. There were rationing coupons only for bread and sugar, the other articles were found very rarely. People had to buy food on a black market, but it was too expensive for most of them. They starved. Till the beginning of the liquidation action in July, 1942 more than 100 old people died each day of starvation.

It seems impossible but people closed inside the walls of the ghetto tried to live normally or almost normally. Doctors worked in hospitals, actors performed in theatres, musicians gave concerts, artists painted, sculptured and organized exhibitions. German authorities liquidated most of the educational, religious and cultural institutions in the ghetto. Schools, libraries, cinemas were closed. On January 1940, all synagogues were closed. The Jewish community organized an illegal system of elementary and high schools, universities and religious school (yeshivas). There was an officially functioning school of nursing in the ghetto. In October 1941, the authorities gave permission to open the elementary and technical schools e.g. School of Applied Graphics and Technical Design.

"Gazeta Zydowska" ("Jewish Gazette"), edited in Polish, was the only one official newspaper in the ghetto. But almost all political parties and youth organizations, acting in conspiracy, edited their newspapers and bulletins. Theatres in the ghetto were opened but they were only allowed to present plays by Jewish authors. Some theatres performed in Polish, e.g. Nowy, Kameralny, Femina, others in Yiddish e.g. Nowy Azazel.

German authorities permitted the Jewish Symphony Orchestra conducted by Szymon Pulman to organize.

Charity institutions were very active, the small one like house committees as well as larger organizations like the Jewish Mutual Aid Society. They tried to help the poorest groups of the community.

Emanuel Ringelblum the researcher of the Jewish history (1900-1944) and his collaborators realized that collecting and saving documents relating to the ghetto reality would be the most important duty of the Jewish historians. They created the conspired Archives of the Ghetto called Ringelblum's Archives. They collected and stored all records concerning the Warsaw ghetto and, as far as possible, documents regarding the different ghettos in Poland. In the Archives were collected public and personal documents, bills, invitations to concerts and performances, illegal press, papers, compositions, printings, advertisements, accounts and diaries. The Archives was hidden in three places. After the war only two parts were found. Presently the Archives are stored in the Jewish Historical Institute as a priceless record of everyday life in the Warsaw ghetto.

On July 22, 1942 Germans began a liquidation of the Warsaw ghetto. In the morning of July 22nd 1942 at 7.30, the borders of the ghetto were surrounded by special detachments of German soldiers. It is rumored that Jews, with some exceptions, men, women and children will be deported to the East. Till 4 p.m. 600 people were selected, and at least the same number will be selected every day. Every day trains took away from 5000-6000 people from so called Umschlagplatz (at the crossing of Stawki, Dzika and Niska Streets) to the Treblinka death camp. Within six weeks 300,000 Jews from the Warsaw ghetto were taken away and murdered in the gas chambers of Treblinka.

At the end of the liquidation (September 6, 1942) Germans ordered a registration of those who had survived in the ghetto. They had to gather in the area of Niska, Smocza, Gesia, Mila and Zamenhofa Streets. Until September 12 the great selection lasted and the so called "life numbers" were, shared out. Some workers of the Judenrat and workers from the German factories and workshops received them. People without "life numbers" were sent to Treblinka. Officially 35,000 people remained in the ghetto. Probably approximately the same quantity of people hid themselves in the bunkers. Jewish owners of "life numbers" were put up in barracks and worked in the Germans workshop.

The idea of the armed resistance and fight against Germans appeared very quickly in plans of the underground organizations in the ghetto. The

first Jewish Fighting Organization (ZOB) was set up on July 28, 1942. But many of its members were taken away to Treblinka during the liquidation of the ghetto. In autumn 1942, the political parties and youth organizations established the Jewish National Committee. The Jewish Fighting Organization was set up on December 2, 1942 as a common structure of armed parties - members of the Jewish National Committee. Mordechaj Anielewicz (1919-1943) from Hashomer Hacair became the chief commander. His second in command and liaison officer on the "Aryan side" was Ischak Cukierman (1914-1981) from Dror. The members of the Command were: Marek Edelman (1922) from Bund, Michal Rojzenfeld (1916-1943) from the communist party (PPR), Jochanan Morgensztern (1905-1943) from Poalej-Syjon the Right Wing and Hersz Berlinski (1908-1944) from Poalej-Syjon the Left Wing. ZOB had 22 fighting groups and approximately 500 members.

The second armed organization in the ghetto was the Jewish Army Union (ZZW) composed of approximately 250 members, under the command of: Oawid Apfelbaum, lieutenant of the Polish Army, Pawel Frenkel and Leon Rodal.

On January 18, 1943, the first battles with Germans took place. The German detachments marching in the ghetto were stopped by ZOB fighters. Thanks to the defense the liquidation of the ghetto was postponed.

On April 19, 1943, the German detachments surrounded the ghetto. The last battle began. Fighters from ZOB and ZZW fought with the predominant enemy. In May, 1943 in uncovered bunker at 18 Mila Street, Mordechaj Anielewicz and his comrades committed suicide.

On May 16, 1943 general Jurgen Stroop ordered the Great Warsaw Synagogue in. Thomackie Street blown up. He wanted that event to be a triumphal final of the liquidation of the Warsaw ghetto. Jürgen Stroop recalled:

"What a wonderful sight! I called out *Heil Hitler!* and pressed the button. A terrific explosion brought flames right up to the clouds. The colors were unbelievable. An unforgettable allegory of the triumph over Jewry. The Warsaw Ghetto has ceased to exist. Because that is what Adolf Hitler and Heinrich Himmller wanted."

Some of the fighters (72) escaped through the sewers to the "Aryan side" (April, 29 and May, 10). A few of the fighting groups remained in the ghetto and fought till autumn, 1943.

The Warsaw Ghetto Uprising collapsed with the surviving people

taken away to the work camps. The Germans destroyed all of the houses and buildings of the Jewish district. The area of the ghetto was constantly guarded. In the ruins the prisoners from the Pawiak prison were being shot. On July, 1943 in prison in Gesia Street (presently Anielewicza Street) Germans established a branch of the concentration camp Majdanek, called "Gesiowka". In August 1944, the prisoners from this camp - Greek, Belgian, French and Dutch Jews were liberated by soldiers from the "Zoska" battalion. During the Warsaw Uprising the former-Jewish quarter was almost completely destroyed.

The illustrated medal was issued in 1983 by the government of Poland to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the liberation of the Warsaw Ghetto.





The Polish Emission Bank note of 100 złoty-Krakow issue, I August 1941 (Pick # 103), was overprinted boldly and diagonally on the obverse in the Polish language the cryptic proclamation "GETTO WALCZY" . . . "The Ghetto Fights"

These notes of the Emission Bank of Poland were issued under the authority of the Nazi overlord of Occupied Poland, the notorious Dr. Hans Frank. That portion of Poland not directly annexed to Germany, the Ukraine, or the Baltic States was called the Gouvernement General and comprised the districts of Warsaw, Lublin, Galicia, and Radom. It was in this area that these notes circulated.

JULIAN II, ROMAN EMPEROR, AD 360-363,
AND FRIEND OF THE JEWS
By Marvin Tameanko

Contrary to popular folklore, not all of the Roman emperors were anti-Semitic and some were quite friendly to the Jews they ruled over. No doubt, most of this friendship was based on political expediency and not on admiration or sympathy for the Jewish religion but, nevertheless, an understanding of Jewish sensitivities made several emperors tolerant to Jewish customs and they enacted laws that protected them from persecution or extended special privileges to their communities. The historian Michael Grant, in his book, *The Jews in the Roman World*, said that, in the first century, Jews made up six to nine percent of the population under Roman rule and so they may have comprised an influential segment of society. Of course there were also some notorious anti-Semites among the Roman emperors and their bigotry is well documented in history but for every anti-Jewish ruler in Rome there was an emperor, equally famous, who treated the Jews favorably. One can compare Hadrian's infamous anti-Jewish attitude to the actions of the greatest emperor of Rome, Augustus, who freed the Jews from the obligation of military service, excused them from appearing in courts on the Sabbath and exempted them from emperor worship. The emperor was so benevolent to the Jews in Rome that at least two synagogues were named after him. Augustus was simply complying with the diplomatic program of his uncle, Julius Caesar, who treated the Jews with respect. The Roman historian, Suetonius, in his book, *The Twelve Caesars* (Julius Caesar, 84), said when Julius Caesar was assassinated all the Jews in the world mourned.

Later in history, the emperor Constantine I, the Great, AD 307-337, was responsible for promoting the anti-Jewish policies adopted by the early Christian Church. However, to counteract his actions, historians could mention his half-nephew, Julian II, the emperor in AD 360-363, who reversed many of Constantine's rulings and was very sympathetic to the Jews, although he had obvious, ulterior motives for being so. Flavius Claudius Julianus was born and raised as a Christian but when the Christian Roman emperors, the three sons of Constantine I, massacred almost his entire family to eliminate any competition to the throne, he lost his faith and reverted to the pagan gods of old Rome. After this conversion, Julian treated the Jews in his domain tolerantly in order to establish some alternatives and opposition to the precepts of Christianity. His support for Judaism even went so far as to his proclaiming that the Temple of Jerusalem, destroyed by Vespasian in AD 70, be rebuilt.

This act endeared him to the Jews and earned him a place on the historical list of royal friends of Judaism. Archaeologists digging at the Western Wall in Jerusalem after 1967 made the sensational discovery of a stone in the lower courses of the wall that had been inscribed with the Hebrew text from Isaiah 66:13-14, "You shall see and your heart shall rejoice; your bones shall flourish like the grass". It is believed that this inscription was carved by a Jew who was responding to Julian's promise to rebuild the Temple in AD 363, and perhaps the stone was used as a cornerstone of the reconstruction. However, the inscription does not seem to have been an official statement. It was not carved by a competent artist, the letters are roughly formed and the lines of the inscription are not aligned parallel to the stone's top edge, so it may have only been a spontaneous expression of joy by a common workman.



וְאַתָּה כוֹשֵׁת לְבָבְךָ
וְעַצְמוֹתְךָ כְּדִשָּׁה

The inscription in modern Hebrew block letters.

The stone in the lower courses of the Western Wall of the Temple Mount with the inscription in Hebrew from Isaiah, 66: 13-14.

After Julian's relatives had all been murdered in AD 337, the young boys in the family, Julian, his half brother Constantius Gallus, and his cousin Nepotian, were permitted to live and only exiled because they posed no threat to the emperor. Spared by fate, these children would play a large part in the later history of Rome. Later in AD 350, when the sons of Constantine had depleted their family and the Empire fell into turmoil, Nepotian seized power in Rome but ruled for only 28 days. In AD 351 Constantius Gallus was brought out of exile by the emperor Constantius II, AD 337-361, and made a Caesar ruling in the East from the city of Antioch but he was deposed and executed only three years later. After the execution of Gallus, Julian was imprisoned as untrustworthy but in AD 355, having exhausted the royal line and lacking close relatives, the emperor Constantius II, released Julian and made him a Caesar. Julian was appointed as the governor of Gaul where he fought successfully against the northern barbarian invaders. In AD 360 Julian was ordered to send his loyal

troops to join the emperor in an unpopular war in Persia so they revolted and proclaimed Julian as emperor. The new Augustus, Julian, set out to confront the reigning emperor but Constantius II died before the battle occurred and Julian became the sole emperor of Rome in AD 360.



A silver siliqua of Julian as a Christian Caesar, governor of Gaul under Constantius II, struck in Arelate (Arles) in Gaul, (mintmark TCON), in AD 355-360, the Roman Imperial Coinage, cited as RIC, 264. Photo courtesy of the Classical Numismatic Group, CNG.

On ascending the throne Julian dropped his Christian beliefs and began to promote a form of freedom of religion even though he himself favored the ancient pagan deities. He removed Christianity from its position as the official state religion and eliminated its privileges and subsidies. This act earned him the title of the "Apostate" from Christian writers and bishops. A more appropriate title, suggested by neutral historians, was the 'Philosopher' because Julian was a scholar who believed in the ancient Greek but pagan philosophy. Julian wrote several still existing essays on philosophy and took to wearing a beard as had the scholars of olden days. Julian struck coins proudly showing him bearded and worn in the length and shape preferred by the pagan philosophers. The Roman and Christian fashion of the day was for men to go beardless and his Christian enemies, particularly the citizens of Antioch, mocked Julian's beard as well as his philosophy in their many holiday plays and farces. This criticism became so acrimonious that Julian wrote a play titled 'Beard- Hater'(Misopogon), that satirized the effeminacy and licentious behavior of the Antiochenes. Julian also dropped the idea of making Antioch his new capital city as a replacement for Constantinople, which reduced Antioch's status and prosperity.

A silver denarius struck in Arelate, (Arles) Gaul, for Julian II, AD 360-363, showing him with his 'philosopher' beard. RIC 309-11. Photo courtesy of CNG.



Furthermore, Julian struck coinage that refuted the symbols of Christianity and employed identifiable pagan themes and designs. The most celebrated coins struck by Julian are the large bronze coinage depicting a hump-back bull and two stars on the reverse that were struck in most of the cities in the Empire. Several interpretations have been offered for this reverse design but the most logical is that it is a pagan theme displaying the bull of Apis, the Egyptian god whose statue was discovered in AD 362 and delivered to Julian in Antioch. Other historians claim the bull represents Taurus, Julian's astrological sign, but this is uncertain. Jewish critics, skeptical of Julian's politically motivated respect for the Jews, identified the Egyptian bull on his coinage with that of the biblical 'Molten Calf', the idol and false god created by Aaron during the Exodus when the Jews abandoned Moses and the laws of the true God. (Exodus. 32. 4).



A large bronze or billon coin, 28 millimeters in diameter, struck in the city of Heraclea, Thrace (modern-day Turkey), for Julian II, AD 360-363, showing the pagan bull and two stars. RIC 102. Photo courtesy of CNG.

Julian's partiality to the Jews must be interpreted not so much as admiration for their religion but rather as a means to undermine the influence of the Church. Julian addressed a letter to the Jewish communities in which he declares the Jews to be free from all the special taxes imposed on them. These taxes, like the 'Fiscus Judaicus' were instituted by Vespasian in AD 72, to replace the traditional Temple taxes and were diverted to maintaining the Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus in Rome. The Jews of the diaspora throughout the Empire had also been required to contribute to this tax and Julian ordered 'Julus', probably Hillel II, (died AD 365), the patriarch of the Jewish community in Palestine, to abolish the tax gatherers who traveled the world to collect this money.

Then Julian issued an order, remarkable for its time, that the Jews should be permitted to live in Jerusalem and that they begin to re-build the Temple. Jerusalem had been closed to the Jews since Hadrian defeated Judaea in AD 135 and the Temple site had been built over with a Roman temple to Jupiter. In his proclamation Julian said, "in order that . . . I may rebuild the sacred city of Jerusalem, which for so many years you have longed to see inhabited, and may bring settlers there, and together with you, may glorify the Most High God therein". (Ecclesiastical History by Salamanus Hermias Sozomenus, written in AD 443-450). Modern historians emphasize that at that time Julian was embarking on a military campaign into Persia and that he suggested rebuilding the Temple only as a diplomatic move in order to rally the Jews to his side. Julian simply wanted to avoid any possible unrest and revolt in Palestine during his war against the Sasanians, who were outwardly tolerant of Judaism. He also wanted to guarantee he had a safe country to retreat to if his war was lost. Most likely these were the real reasons behind Julian's call for a reconstruction of Jerusalem.

Despite this cold fact the Jews of the diaspora rejoiced at Julian's announcement and began to flock to Jerusalem from all over the Empire. Thumbing their noses at the anti-Jewish authorities in this mostly Christian city, where many churches had been built, the Jews began assembling materials and workman to rebuild the Temple. It is said in folklore that the Jewish women stripped off their jewelry to contribute to the expenses of the reconstruction. The children and women also helped to dig the ground on the Temple Mount walls carrying away the rubbish in their aprons and skirts.

Also, it was reported that Julian put his friend, Alypius, formerly the Prefect of Britain, in charge of the construction and probably during that time the inscription from Isaiah was carved into the wall by a zealous, overjoyed workman.

But all these efforts were futile. While on campaign against the Sasanians in AD 363 Julian was killed in a skirmish. The details of this event are obscure but it was rumored that he was killed by one of his officers, a Christian angry at the suppression of his religion by the emperor. The army declared Jovian, the 'Comes Domesticorum' or commander of the officers' cadet corps, as the emperor. Jovian, a staunch Christian, immediately revoked Julian's pro-pagan and pro-Jewish acts and rulings, reinstated Christianity as the state religion, and the dream of rebuilding the Temple went up in flames.

And this supposedly was exactly what happened; the Christian legends say that the reconstruction stopped because fires erupted from the ground to burn the workmen digging around the Temple Mount. The Christian leaders attributed these flames to a heavenly miracle sent to stop the rebuilding, but historian speculate that sparks from the diggers shovels striking stones ignite pockets of methane gas in the ground which had accumulated from the decaying vegetable matter buried in the dumps. Moreover, even many Jews preferred that the rebuilding of the Temple cease because they resented Julian's use of the Jews as a 'cat's paw' in his campaign to undercut Christianity. Besides this, many rabbis refused to accept a pagan emperor as the initiator of the Temple's reconstruction. They felt that only they or the Messiah were entitled to do this.

Despite all this rancor, when word of the death of Julian II reached them, all the Jews in the Roman Empire lamented the loss of a powerful, imperial friend.

The Jews of Oran

Oran, the second largest city in Algeria and a major trading and industrial center is located in Western Algeria near the border with Morocco at a point where Algeria is closest to the Spanish coast. Founded in the 10th century by Andalusian merchants, Oran was incorporated into the Kingdom of Tlemcen and served as its main seaport after 1437.

The Beni Zian rulers of Tlemcen, unlike the Almohads that preceded them, displayed a more favorable attitude towards the Jews and invited them to settle in their kingdom probably already in the early 14th century. However, the first mention of a Jewish community in Oran dates from 1391, when Jewish refugees arrived in the city having escaped the anti-Jewish persecutions in Spain. The Jewish population of Oran increased towards the end of the 15th century with the arrival of immigrants from Spain. In 1492 and again in 1502 Oran received groups of Spanish refugees, both Jews and Muslims, fleeing from forcible conversion to Christianity.

In 1509 Oran was captured by Spain in a military campaign. Although the first intention of the Spanish troops was to expel the Jews from the city, it was not long before a few families were allowed live in the region. Oran remained under Spanish dominance for most of the next three centuries. While in Spain and its colonies there was a total ban on Jewish presence and crypto-Jews were persecuted by the Inquisition, in Oran the Spanish monarchs tolerated for much of the 16th and 17th centuries the existence of a small but influential Jewish community. Thus the small Spanish enclave of Oran along with the nearby port of Mers el-Kebir remained the only place in which the old Spanish *convivencia* of Christians, Muslims and Jews continued for another century and a half.

A list from 1530 mentions about one hundred twenty five Jews of Oran as enjoying the protection of the King of Spain and another seventy two Jews who lived in the area and who did not enjoy the same legal status. The Jewish population stayed within the same limits for most of the first half of the 17th century, including a number of "foreign" (*forasteros*) Jews who were permitted to reside in the Spanish territory.

The Jews of Oran lived in a distinct district of the city where they had a synagogue and continued the practice of Judaism openly. They also maintained relations with other Jewish communities in North Africa and around the Mediterranean. These relations along with a knowledge of both the Arabic and Spanish languages turned into important assets that

contributed to the commercial success of the Jews of Oran. Their contribution to the local economy as agents and mediators between the Spanish enclave and the Muslim hinterland assured them the protection of the royal authorities against the Inquisition.

In 1669 the Spanish Queen Maria of Austria decided to expel all the Jews of Oran and its vicinity. The Jewish population, estimated at about 450 persons, was given eight days to leave the city. They traversed the Mediterranean for Nice, then under the control of the Dukes of Savoy, and from there some continued to Livorno, in Italy, where they joined the local Jewish community. The synagogue of Oran was converted into a church. Jews could return to Oran only in 1708, when the Muslims led by the Bey of Mascara, Mustapha ben Yussef, also known as Bou Shlahem captured the city. The Spanish rule returned to Oran in 1732 and it appears that some Jewish individuals were permitted from time to time to enter Oran and even sojourn there.

On the night of October 8/9, 1790, Oran was destroyed by a catastrophic earthquake that caused thousands of casualties. The Spaniards were not interested in rebuilding the city; two years later Spain abandoned Oran and passed it on to Mohammed el Kebir, the Bey of Algiers. The city suffered even more when the remaining population was decimated by a plague epidemic in 1794.

Following the restoration of the Muslim governance over Oran, the Jews from the neighboring areas responded to the invitation of the Bey of Algiers and settled in Oran. The emerging Jewish community brought a quarter of the town close to Ras el-Ain and was granted land for a cemetery in the district of Sidi Shaaban. The rights of the Jewish community are detailed in an agreement of 1801.

During the early years of the 19th the Jewish population of Oran grew with the arrival to the city of Jews from other cities in Algeria and Morocco who were attracted by the new commercial opportunities between Oran and the ports of the Iberian Peninsula - Gibraltar, Malaga, Almeria, as well as Italy and southern France.

The Jewish community was governed by a *mokdem* (or *mukkadem*, a term that sometimes was understood as being the equivalent of the Hebrew title of *nagid*, head of the Jewish community) who was assisted by a council called in Hebrew "tovey-ha'ir". The *mokdem* was named by the bey and his main task was to represent the interests of the Jewish community in its relations with the Turkish authorities. The *mokdem* was responsible with the payment of the taxes by the Jewish community and he enjoyed an extensive authority over the community. He named the other

members of the community leadership, controlled their activities, and raised new taxes. The *mokdem* was assisted by a *sheikh* whose authority was limited; his main prerogative was to make sure that the decisions of the *mokdem* and of the other leaders of the community were implemented and respected and that the community members kept their religious and social duties. All disputes among the community members, including marriages and divorce, were decided by the *dayanim* (religious judges), with the exception of criminal matters or disputes between Jews and Muslims, who were decided by a *qadi* (Muslim judge).

The security of the Jewish community in Oran was sometimes threatened by political rivalries between the local Muslim leaders and the central Turkish authorities in Algiers, and by the growing interference of the European powers, especially France. In 1805 many Jews of Oran fled to Algiers fearing the aftermaths of a local rebellion. In 1813 some Jews who sided with a local pro-French bey, who rebelled, were executed and other families were deported to Medea, when Oran returned to Turkish central control. In July 1830 Oran was secured by the French troops who prevented a Turkish plan of massacring and deporting the local Jewish population. At the time of the French entrance to Oran in 1831 the great majority of the city population was Jewish. According to a census conducted by the French there were about 2,800 Jews in Oran, well ahead of the local Christians and Muslims who together amounted to about 1,000 inhabitants. French rule lasted until the Algerian independence in 1962.

The French administration abolished the old system of government of the community and instead the French system of *consistoire* was introduced. The Jewish community was governed by a Grand Rabbin and a president. A *Beth Din* (Jewish religious court) was established by the French in 1836; it functioned for five years under the presidency of Rabbi Messaoud Darmon before it was canceled by the French authorities. Messaoud Darmon became Grand Rabin of Oran in 1844 and kept this title until his death in 1866. The religious tradition of Oran is expressed in its own *mahzor* (book of prayers): *Mahzor Wahran*.

After 1860 the number of Jews in Oran augmented with the arrival of new Jewish settlers, who fled the ravages of the Spanish-Moroccan war of 1859-1860. By the mid 19th century there were about 5,000 Jews in Oran. The community was administrated by a *consistoire* that had a president and some ten members elected from the local notables. The religious functions were performed by a Grand Rabbin. A report from 1850 mentions another sixteen rabbis, three *dayanim*, and three *shochtim*

(ritual butchers). During the mid 19th century there were seventeen synagogues in Oran; of them only one belonged to the community while the others were private foundations run by the descendants of the original donor who decided who could attend them. The community was administrated by a number of committees charged with collecting money for the maintenance of the Talmud-Torah and assistance for the needy members of the community. A separate *Gemiluth Hassadim* organization was in charge of the funerals and assisted the family members during the mourning period. One of the committees was headed by a rabbi and was in charge of the local education. There were about twelve traditional schools that were attended by about 550 students. The first French school was opened in 1849 and by the mid 19th century attracted around 100 students.

A major change in the legal status of the Jews of Oran, and indeed of the other Jewish communities of Algeria, resulted from the implementation of the law of October 24, 1870, generally known as the Cremieux Decree after Adolphe Cremieux (1796-1880), the Jewish French Minister of Justice at the time. The Cremieux Decree granted full French citizenship to all Jewish inhabitants of Algeria. Four years later the law was restricted to only those Jews who either they or their parents were born in Algeria before the French conquest of 1830. French citizenship gave all male Jews the right to participate in the local municipal elections.

The occupational structure of the Jewish population of Oran changed gradually in the period starting with the end of the 19th century. If by 1900 the majority of Jews were still traditional artisans - tailors, goldsmiths, shoemakers, bakers, cabinet makers - and unskilled laborers, later during the first half of the 20th century as a result of better education many entered the liberal professions. There were also some women who worked outside home as dressmakers, domestic workers, and typists. It is worth mentioning that the first vineyards in the neighborhood of Oran were planted and owned by Jews. Jews were prominent among the shopkeepers of the city and dealt with a large variety of merchandise. A number of prominent Jews of Oran continued the long established commercial links their ancestors developed for centuries with the neighboring countries.

By the mid 19th century, Oran had developed an anti-Jewish atmosphere. Old anti-Jewish bias brought to Oran by Catholic settlers from Spain and France were exploited frequently by local politicians. The

first anti-Jewish organization was founded in July 1871 as a direct reaction to the granting of French citizenship to Jews. Anti-Jewish attacks in the local press and even anti-Jewish physical violence preceded by almost two decades the riots exacerbated by the outbreak of the Dreyfus affair. The anti-Jewish campaign had many supporters in Algeria, especially in Oran, and it brought to an aggravation of In May 1897 the Jewish quarter and many Jewish shops were attacked by both European settlers and local Muslims. Several Jewish policemen were laid off and Jewish patients were expelled from public hospitals. However, the French authorities refused to cancel the Cremieux Decree which was the principal demand of the anti-Jewish parties and organizations. The anti-Jewish incitement declined after 1902, when the radical anti-Jewish party lost the municipal elections, but Oran remained a major bastion of anti-Semitism in North Africa.

Although massive Jewish support and participation in WW1 helped to calm the attacks against the Jews, anti-Semitic attacks returned during the 1920's only to worsen in the late 1930's. In 1936 there were new violent attacks against Jews in Oran and its department. When France was defeated by Germany in June 1940, Algeria remained under the jurisdiction of the pro-Nazi Vichy government. The introduction of anti-Semitic legislation followed shortly: in October 1940 the Cremieux Decree was revoked and the Jews of Algeria lost their French citizenship. In March 1941 the racial laws of the Vichy government started to be implemented in Algeria. Jews were expelled from all organizations and associations; they were denied the practice of liberal professions - physicians, lawyers, realtors, insurance agents, nurses, chemists, teachers and educators. Jews were allowed to teach only in Jewish educational institutions, like Alliance Israélite Universelle. Jewish children were expelled from elementary and secondary schools, and the number of Jewish students was set up at three percent. Some Jews, especially young students, joined the anti-Fascist Resistance.

In 1942 the Jewish community of Oran sheltered a group of 150 Jews from Libya that had been deported by the Italian Fascist authorities. The landing of the American troops in November 1942 in Oran, one of the main objectives of the Allied invasion of North Africa, ended the anti-Jewish persecutions. The Cremieux Decree was reintroduced one year later, in November 1943, when Charles de Gaulle took over the control of Algeria and after direct intervention from the American administration. Some Jews joined the Allied armies, especially the military units of Free France and participated in the invasion of Corsica and then of southern France, at Toulon, as well as in the campaign in Italy.

The years that followed WW2 saw the breakout of the Algerian struggle for independence. After 1954 the conflict between the Muslim population of Algeria and the European settlers turned into an increasingly violent struggle. The Jews strove to remain neutral as much as possible, but soon they too were entangled into the war only to become targets for both the Algerian and French nationalists. Oran, that in the early 1950's had a majority of European population, was spared for some time from the violence. The city's Jewish community of almost thirty thousand people continued its regular life, but in February 1956 rioters attacked Jewish property and lives.

According to the Evian Accords that ended the Algerian war, the Jews were considered European settlers. Legislation adopted by the newly independent Algeria granted Algerian citizenship only to those residents whose father or paternal grandfather were Muslims. Moreover, the Supreme Court of Justice of Algeria declared that the Jews were no longer under the protection of the Law. The great massacres against the European population in June 1962 brought about the immediate exodus of the Jewish community of Oran. The departure of the few Jews left in Oran continued throughout the decade with less than 400 still living in the city in 1968. The great majority emigrated to France with Israel as their second main destination. The Great synagogue was converted into a mosque in 1975. By the early 2000's there do not seem to have been any Jews living in Oran.

During the period of financial hardship following the First World War, many cities in France and her colonies were hard pressed to find small change currency necessary to conduct business. The Chambres of Commerce issued chits which served as currency. In Oran, because of the large Jewish presence in the city, these notes were printed with a Jewish Star



AINA AT THE ANA IN MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN

By Donna J. Sims, NLG

The ANA Convention was in full swing once I arrived in Milwaukee on Wednesday, August 8. I had never been to Milwaukee before, let alone the State of Wisconsin. The weather was really nice, although the locals thought it was hot and I said "this is NOT hot." Once checked in at the Hyatt Regency, it was off to the Convention Center. It was really nice having a skywalk from the Hotel to the Convention Center; a person didn't even have to step outside. Once there, it was the beginning of many AINA activities for me. Some would be fun but for the most part, it would be many hours of work.



Donna and Dr. Walter Ostromecki
Newly elected ANA board member

It was not long before it was time to head for the meeting of the AINA Board of Directors. Many things were discussed and accomplished at the meeting for the organization itself and for the membership in general. It was reported that AINA has a total of 580 regular members and 202 Life members. Total assets as of July 31, 2007, were reported as \$287,438.55. With elections being held earlier this year, and having received no new nominations, the three board members up for re-election were deemed duly elected. These were Mel Wacks and Sagi Solomon from California and J. J. Van Grover of New York. New officers were also elected: Mel Wacks, president; J. J. Van Grover, vice-president; and secretary/treasurer, Donna Sims. In this past year, many things have been accomplished on behalf of AINA. The Bi-Laws have been updated and made current, the website has been brought up-to- date and the index to The Shekel has been brought up-to- date and is now posted on the AINA website. Plans are to include the first two indices also on the website. Many thanks and appreciation were extended to both Eddie and Florence Schuman, for their many years of service. The best and most fun news to come out of the board meeting was the possibility of a "reunion" tour to Israel.

At the General Membership Meeting, we were privileged to have in attendance as our special guests, both gentlemen from the Israel Government Coins and Medals Corporation, General Manager Raphael Jehudai and Deputy Managing Director, Yossef Attali. Each of them gave greetings from Israel and on behalf of the IGCM. The featured speaker was David Hendin, who presented an illustrated talk on "Primer to Ancient Biblical and Judaean Coins". His color slide presentation was very informative and most interesting. David, the author of several books, gave an overview of ancient Judaean coins and Judaea Capta coins. His presentation was videotaped and will soon be made available. Be sure to check our website periodically for a special announcement regarding this fabulous numismatic program.



Working at the AINA Table was actually a lot of fun. Greeting old friends and meeting new ones is and always has been a pleasure for me. We signed up 10 new members during the convention in addition to one that was a renewal. As usual, I did my best to be the "unofficial photographer" for this story. Attached are several of the pictures that were taken. It should be noted here that numismatics of Israel was well represented at the convention. AINA president Mel Wacks was honored by the NLG this year for one of the articles he had written, Simcha Kuritzky won top honors for his exhibit on Israel coins and medals and the ICGM was presented an award for having one of the most beautiful and inspirational coins of the year.



The ANA Banquet held Saturday evening was practically a "standing room only" function. One of the fun things at the banquet was, when you were leaving, you were given a "convention-only" new Redbook, which had a special-made front cover. The last I knew, this particular book was being sold for \$55.

All in all, I think the convention itself was a success and I know that it was completely successful for AINA: Our Board of Directors and Officers are eager and willing to do whatever is necessary to keep AINA an active and vibrant organization, just as it always has been and hopefully, just as it always will be in the future for many years to come.

PROFILE OF A CHEMIST

Carl Rosenblum was born in Brooklyn, New York and is now 92 years young. He graduated from City College of New York as a chemical engineer. He married Laura in 1942 and she and Carl have been married for 65 years now, having lived in Connecticut for the last 18 years. They have three sons, Andy, who is a Ph.D., Peter, who is an M.D., and Bill, a coin dealer from Colorado. They also have 6 grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

During the War years, Carl worked in the Engineering Department of the Army, designing rockets, pyrotechnics, and making several patents on parts. One of his main duties was to keep watch on the efficiency of the production of all the engineering parts. After the Army years, Carl worked nearly 20 years at Rose Ribbon and Carbon, where he was general manager and chief engineer. He usually managed to return home with the bottom of his shoes purple due to the making of ribbons and carbon paper. Through the years, Carl has been honored numerous times with awards from the chemistry industry.

Carl left that company to form his own consulting firm, calling it W.P. Andrews Co. His business was to consult with companies on how to make and manufacture ribbon and carbon paper. The company was named after his three sons, William, Peter and Andrew (there was never a Mr. Andrews). Andy worked with his father at W.P. through his college and grad school years. Bill never worked at W.P., but became a full time coin dealer with the help and advice from his dad. While at W.P. Andrews, Carl traveled around the world visiting many countries, England, Austria, Italy, France and Israel, among others. He was traveling so often that many times Laura would join him on the weekends.

Carl has always had an interest in coinage of Israel. His love for and his fascination with Israel helped to turn his hobby of collecting coins into a business in 1969. During the 1970's and 1980's, Carl was a fixture at most coin shows held in New York and New Jersey. He was the driving force behind the formation of the INS of New Jersey where he became its first president in 1972-1973 Laura became it's president in the years 1979-1980. Carl was an active member of several of the New York area Israel coin clubs, as well as being a Life Member of AINA, and a member of the ANA. He was a tireless promoter of Israel coins at other coin and stamp

clubs in the New York and New Jersey areas. Carl is a bit modest in letting it be known that he was a contributor to the 2nd and 3rd editions of the Sylvia Haffner book as well as working with her on the conversion table for the 4th edition. He probably was a contributor on the 1st edition, but that particular book does not list individual contributors. In addition to these organizations, Carl is the current president of the Heritage Stamp and Coin Club, president of the Heritage Village Chess Club and he also teaches Chess to youngsters at the Southbury Library and at the Long Meadow Elementary School in Middlebury, Connecticut. In addition to these organizations, he is a Lifetime Emeritus member of the American Chemical Society.

(A postscript from Bill: In the late 1960's, Carl was sitting in his car at a stop light when a truck hit him from behind, landing him in the hospital for quite some time. It was during this time that Carl made the decision to make his avocation his vocation and became a dealer of Israel coins. Carl's back surgeon would often come into his dad's hospital room and complain about the stock market. Carl would suggest that he consider investing in some coins from Israel and the rest, as they say, is history...



OPERATION BERNHARD

Operation Bernhard was the name of a secret Nazi German plan devised during the Second World War to destabilize the British economy by flooding the country with forged Bank of England £5, £10, £20, and £50 notes. The plan was directed by, and named after, SS Sturmbannführer (Major) Bernhard Krüger. Krueger, a textile engineer, figured out how to match the paper, printing, and design of the impressive British notes. He found his forgers in Jewish death camps on the orders of SS Reichsfuehrer Heinrich Himmler. Some were plucked from Auschwitz by Krueger himself, who courteously addressed them with the formal German Sie.

Krueger promised the captives more food than they could eat, entertainment, cigarettes, newspapers, ping-pong, theatrical performances and radios, many of these delights even high ranking officials were not even getting. He continued promising they would not be killed and that when Germany won the war, they would be given their own places to live in peace with other German citizens. These Jewish men, many of whom already had been put on the list for execution at other facilities, having a new lease on life and finding that the major seemed to be a man of his word, worked diligently for him.

The SS planned to keep the operation secret by killing them when the job was done. The prisoners worked in the Sachsenhausen concentration camp without the knowledge that they were marked for death when they had finished their jobs. But from the start, they wondered whether they should stretch out their work and risk execution for sabotage, or perform efficiently and thus hasten their own deaths. No one ever knew for sure where Krueger stood, but by keeping the operation going, he kept himself from being sent to the Russian front. What all these men said and thought as they lived under this sword of Damocles makes chilling, personal drama.

Beginning in 1942, the work of engraving the complex printing plates, developing the appropriate rag-based paper with the correct watermarks, and breaking the code to generate valid serial numbers was extremely difficult, but by the time Sachsenhausen was evacuated in April 1945 the printing press there had produced 8,965,080 banknotes with a total value of £134,610,810.

The notes are considered among the most perfect counterfeits ever produced, being extremely difficult although not impossible to distinguish from the real thing.

Although the initial plan was to destabilize the British economy by dropping the notes from aircraft, on the assumption that while some honest people would hand them in most people would keep the notes, in practice this plan was not put into effect. The Luftwaffe did not have enough planes to deliver the forgeries, and by that time the operation was in the hands of SS foreign intelligence.

From late 1943 approximately one million notes per month were printed, and many were transferred from SS headquarters to a former hotel near Merano in Trentino-Alto Adige/Südtirol, Northern Italy, from where they were laundered and used to pay for strategic imports and to pay German agents. It has been reported that counterfeit currency was used to finance the rescue of the arrested former Italian dictator Benito Mussolini in 1943 but there is no evidence to confirm this.

The Bank of England first learned of this plot from a spy as early as 1939. It first detected the existence of the notes in 1943, and declared them "the most dangerous ever seen." Clerks first recorded the counterfeits from a British bank in Tangiers. They were recorded, like all notes, in handwritten ledgers still in the Bank's archives (every banknote issued by the Bank of England as late as the 1940s was recorded in large leather-bound ledgers, as the notes were a liability of the bank), it was noted that one of the notes had already been recorded as having been paid off.

Following the evacuation of Sachsenhausen, the 142 member Jewish counterfeiting team was transferred to Redl-Zipf in Austria, a sub-camp of the Mauthausen-Gusen concentration camp. At the beginning of May 1945 the team was ordered to be transferred to the Ebensee sub-camp, where they were all to be killed together. However their SS guards had only one truck to convey their prisoners, so it was necessary for the truck to make three trips. On the third trip the truck broke down, and the last batch of prisoners had to be marched to Ebensee, where they arrived on 4 May. The guards of the first two batches of prisoners fled when the prisoners at Ebensee camp revolted and refused to be moved into tunnels, where they presumably were to have been blown up. The delayed arrival of the third batch therefore saved the lives of all.

Then the American army arrived, and the prisoners dispersed among the other sixteen thousand prisoners in the camp. Thus, because of the order that the prisoners all be killed together, none were actually killed. They were liberated from Ebensee by US forces on 5 May 1945.

It is believed that most of the notes produced ended up at the bottom of Lake Töplitz, near Ebensee, from where they were recovered

by divers in 1959, but examples continued to turn up in circulation in Britain for many years, which caused the Bank of England to withdraw all notes larger than £5 from circulation, and not reintroduce the denominations until the early 1960s (£10), 1970 (£20), and 1980 (£50).

After the war, Major Krüger was detained by the British for two years, then turned over to the French for a year. He said they asked him to forge documents but that he refused. He was released in 1948 without any charges being pressed. In the 1950s he went before a De-Nazification Court, where statements were produced from the Jewish forger-inmates that he had been responsible for saving their lives. He later worked for the company which had produced the special paper for the Operation Bernhard forgeries. He died in 1989.

By the end of the war, Operation Bernhard had left its imprint. Through one of the Jewish money launderers, the Jewish underground passed on thousands of counterfeits to help the ingathering of exiles to Palestine and the purchase of war materiel for the nascent Israeli army. The Bank of England was so embarrassed by the massive counterfeit that it not only burned the fakes but some of its files. In the continuing and futile search for Nazi loot and bank records deep in the Alpine lakes where the SS dumped millions of forged bills, the financial and political ripples continued into this century.



There are a number of very small but discernible differences between the Operation Bernhard counterfeits and genuine notes. A counterfeit has a dull look in Britannia eyes, her lower lip not as full, less clarity on the cross at top of her crown, fleur-de-lis on the crown not as well defined, and the marking on the vase and the shadow around it not as dark.

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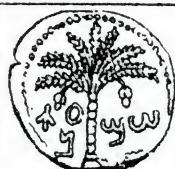
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THE WHITE CITY OF TEL AVIV

FIRST COIN IN THE NEW
"UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITES IN ISRAEL" SERIES
Legal Tender issued by the Bank of Israel

Twelve sites in Israel have been declared by UNESCO as World Heritage Sites and, so far, four of these have been chosen as the features of the coins in this new series: The White City of Tel Aviv, Masada, Akko, and Tel Sheva, near Beer Sheva.

The White City of Tel Aviv with its Bauhaus Architecture was declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO, in 2003. This style of architecture was developed in Germany in the 1920s and it became popular in Tel Aviv in the 1930s. Today, Tel Aviv has the largest concentration in the world of buildings built in the Bauhaus "International Style" with more than 4,000 buildings built between the years 1931 - 1956.

The term International Style was applied to the American form of Bauhaus architecture. These are low buildings, usually two to four floors, built as single buildings and covered with light colored plaster. They were used as residential and public structures.

The coin depicts Tel Aviv's typical International Bauhaus Architecture characterized by its balconies and flat roofs, asymmetry, functionality and simplicity, and bears the emblems of UNESCO and the World Heritage Sites. The reverse design of each denomination includes a different architectural diagram of the Tel Aviv Bauhaus buildings.

Coin Design: Meir Eshel



Coin Specifications

No.	Cat. No.	Metal and Finish	Face Value	Mint Mark	Diameter (mm)	Weight (g)	Maximum Mintage
1>	31743300	Gold/917 22k, Proof	NIS 10	"נ" (Mem)	30	16.96	555
2>	21743380	Silver/925, Proof	NIS 2	"נ" (Mem)	38.7	28.80	2,800
3>	21743300	Silver/925, Proof-like	NIS 1	Star of David	30	14.40	1,800
4>	71743331	Set of the 3 above coins					
5>	71743222	Set of the 2 silver coins					

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